



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 30, 2008

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

As you continue to craft an economic stimulus package, we respectfully request that you include an extension of the H-2B returning worker program. Without an immediate extension of the returning worker program, small and seasonal businesses are confronting labor shortages and increased economic hardship this year.

Small businesses are often referred to as the backbone of our economy, representing more than 99 percent of all employers and creating half of our gross domestic product. The restaurants, hotels, landscapers, carnivals, seafood processors, other small businesses across the nation which rely on the H-2B visa program for assistance are an important part of our economy's success.

By January 2, 2008, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services had already received enough applications to exceed the cap for H-2B visas for the second half of FY 2008. With only 66,000 visas available each year, thousands of small businesses with peak seasons in late spring and summer have been locked out of the visa process. Many seasonal businesses will not have enough workers to meet their needs and some businesses may even have to close their doors.

To highlight the immediate need for action, 64 Members of the House and 29 Senators wrote to the President on January 28, 2008 urging him to extend the H-2B program to assist these businesses. As representatives of this large bipartisan group, we urge you to include an extension of the H-2B returning worker program in the economic stimulus package the Senate will soon consider.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please contact us or have your staff contact Josephine Eckert with Congressman Bart Stupak's office at 225-4735.

Sincerely,



Bart Stupak
Member of Congress



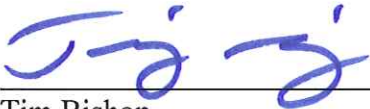
Thelma Drake
Member of Congress



Bill Delahunt
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Virginia Foxx
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Tim Bishop
Member of Congress



Jim Gerlach
Member of Congress

Enclosure